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### Wandering Wheels Newsletter, February 1989

Wandering Wheels

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# WHEELS' NEWS

P.O. Box 207, Upland, IN 46989

FEBRUARY 1989

Area 317/ 998-7490

It's HISTORY! On September 9th the Wheels' staff met 30 Chinese from Mainland China and officially launched a 42-day coast-to-coast bicycle tour.

## SOME BASICS ABOUT THE CHINESE:



1. Oldest rider 51; youngest 24; average age 30.
2. Six women and 24 men.
3. Most of them out of shape (raw recruits).
4. They thought we were trying to starve them to death (they could eat their weight in food each day)!

5. All of them preferred noodles to McDonald's (noodles cost 25¢ per package).
6. Didn't use Chapstick.
7. Stopped eating at Chinese restaurants when the price of meals finally dawned on them.



8. Saved their money for a shopping spree in Hong Kong; decided Wal Mart had best prices here in the states (they really had a discerning eye).
9. Most popular buys: after-Halloween-sale on M & M's (took them back to friends in China).

10. Took long lunch breaks (what else can one do coming from a non-profit mo-

## Who Were These People?



*Team arriving at Los Angeles airport.*

Over the weeks of cycling across America together the staff finally started assembling the pieces regarding the makeup of this group. Initially, I was disappointed. Why? Because they were so old! Their average age was 30 and their leader was 51. I had expected a bunch of college age people. Most of the group were married and had their own families. Three of the female riders had young children at home. They definitely were not athletes or cyclists. They rode at one speed – eleven miles per hour! Boy, does that ever wreck your average miles per hour! You better believe Wolf Creek Pass at 11,000 feet was a slow day!

When I sent the invitation to China Youth Travel the basic requirement was that all of those who accepted the invite would cycle the whole distance. Many of the riders told me that out of the one billion, two hundred million people who occupy China many would have accepted the invite even if it meant crawling across the United States! So, we were hamstringed with 30 Chinese who literally had been taken from behind desks, given a couple practice days of riding, and then shipped to Los Angeles where we met them for the beginning of the tour. I felt like a Marine drill sergeant meeting raw recruits. As is the case for most of the people allowed to leave China, they must participate in activity abroad that will enhance their own profession and be of mutual benefit to the country. Our newly arrived friends were from the Transportation and Tourism Bureau of Guangdong Province representing nearly seventy million people.

That's just one province or state – almost a third of the population of the United States. To visit America via bike would be a very prestigious thing to do. Just to be here would be significant, but to cycle coast to coast... unheard of in China! We realized early on that they would receive promotion because of this feat. As you





tivated country?).

11. They could sleep at the "drop of a bike"!
12. Over half were chain smokers and most preferred beer to water (liked to party).
13. Average salary in China \$75 per month.



17. Six spoke English.
18. Suntans were out and light skin in. (Boy, would that ever play havoc with our economy!)
19. Washed their clothes every night in a sink or on shower floor (looked like a Chinese laundry!)
20. Snorers were placed in private rooms. (Chubby, angelic Buddha was king!)



21. Played cards, chess and basketball.
22. Wanted pictures taken with anyone in a uniform.
23. Loved to disco but didn't know how.
24. "Macho" was in; even called potato chips macho!
25. Respected power. It helped to be a good arm wrestler! (Thanks, God, for unusual gifts!)
26. Wanted to know how much pay each job created.
27. Majority were agnostics or athiests.
28. Majority didn't want to go home.
29. Most felt America was more peaceful than they expected (VCR's and movies had formed most of their opinions).

30. Two defected.

*The above data sounds a wee-bit negative – not so! This was one of the most successful and meaningful trips God has allowed me to experience in Wheels' history. (I'm a hopeless romantic!)*

14. Only 2 had ever driven a car and none had the prospects of owning a car.
15. All but one from same province or state, Guangdong.
16. All came from same Unit which included Departments of Transportation and Tourism representing positions from customs to guides.

can see, there were several reasons for their volunteering, the least of which was to discover God.

Mandarin is their language. Many of them had sharpened their English via Voice of America before coming to America. I insisted on their attending morning worship services on Sundays. After we got to know each other well enough, some asked why they had to attend the morning service. I tried to explain that it meant something special to the congregation. "Yes, but we don't understand the message because we don't speak English," was their reason. I very slowly explained to them that my staff and I attend and sometimes we don't understand the language either. They smiled and GOT THE MESSAGE.

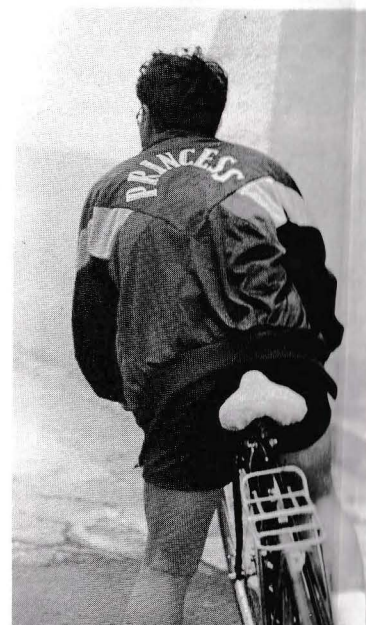
As it started getting colder we had a great need for gloves. Rather than buy them we told the church congregations about our need and more than enough gloves

*Dipping "wheels" in the Pacific Ocean.*

were provided for the riders. Our Chinese friends were from a part of China that is more like Florida. Who needs gloves?

Bowling was new to them and rollerskating didn't grab them. They wore thin nylon socks and Adidas warmups with "Princess" on the back. "Princess" is a beer, so we had Budweiser being sported across the United States. The cigarette was a serious vice. Fruit was the best buy, both in quantity and quality. They expressed their thanks with gift giving and not so much with verbal thank you's. Most of them didn't know each other before the tour began, but they developed warmth in their closeness toward one another.

Home visits with our American hosts were a real plus. Much of the depth of our input had to do with how pleasing the family visits were. Normally, the Chinese were picked up after the evening meal and program and then brought back to the church early the next morning often the families wanted them to stay longer and some even let them make free phone calls to China. Some gave them money. One family drove back to Upland to greet the Chinese when they stopped off on their way to Chicago. Good letter writing and pen pal stuff have already started between the Chinese and Americans. We, as a staff,



*Princess sounds ever so sweet, but it is the equivalent to Budweiser in the U.S. "Whoever thought we'd be pushing beer!"*

hoped for this!

We had a Halloween party, bobbing for apples and all. Many wore costumes and others got in the spirit by carving pumpkins. Would you believe the Chinese carved their pumpkin faces with slanted eyes?

One great story to come out of the tour concerned

*Dale Thomas – Dale, River, and Sonny checking out HUGE American horse!*



*Continued on page 2*

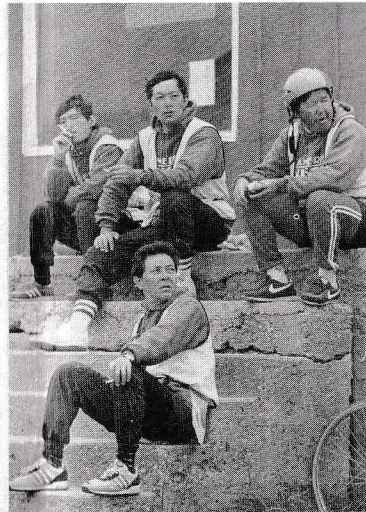


Continued from page 1

Dale Thomas. Dale's history with Wheels goes way back to the late 70's. Then, in 1980 and 1986 he rode coast to coast. Both times he was very large, pushing 280 pounds. That was his Sumo wrestling weight and not his cycling weight. He used Wheels to get himself in shape. He has been a super friend over the years.

Short story gets longer: He went to law school, received his degree and spent time with Judge Sessions in San Antonio. When Sessions was promoted to head the FBI, Dale went along as an aid and was rapidly promoted as a member of the FBI. Pretty prestigious, huh? Well, Dale wanted a "last fling" at a coast to coast so he volunteered for the China tour. I thought it would be great having an FBI man along!

Who knows, maybe the Chinese were sending the KGB version of the same thing along with their people. Dale, of course, was big at 230 pounds, and he had a great way of relating to the Chinese. They really liked him. He reminded me of the giant in Gulliver's Travels. The Chinese called him "strong one" or "macho". Endear himself he did. The Chinese were always playing jokes on him, stuffing things down his pants, smearing things on his body, you name it. It was all in kid-like fun. One day, when the Chinese were cutting up with Dale, I got their attention and asked if they knew what FBI meant. They said, "No". I said, "Federal Bureau of Investigation." "What's that?" they remarked. I said, "America's number one police force and do you know that Dale is a member?" You could have heard a pin drop! I don't think I have ever seen so many Chinese mouths so wide open! Several came to me and said, "We will apologize!" They were really scared. The staff laughed and said, "Dale loves it. Keep giving him trouble!"



*The majority of them smoked. Cigarettes are a high tax item in China and smoking is encouraged.*

## CHURCHES

Our route covered the traditional southern leg--Southern California to Rehoboth Beach. Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, Durango (Colorado), Kansas City, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Parkersburg (West Virginia), D.C. and the Atlantic Ocean were all en route. All in all we were hosted by forty churches. The "church story" was the delight of the tour. Most of the church congregations fed us, many placed us in their homes. The home visits seemed to please the Chinese as much as some of the more exotic visits to museums, et cetera. Mike (his English name) sat for an hour mesmerized by a household dishwasher. Simple household appliances were a real source of entertainment--maybe even hope. Showers, food, housing, caring, welcoming and waving goodbye all worked towards melting their hearts.

It was not my intent to preempt God's timing in seeing the Chinese converted to Christianity. Several church people along the way were genuinely interested in knowing how many had been converted. It struck me funny, this question, "How many of them have been born again?" Our language barrier was

group, we could pray? They clapped and almost cheered as if to say, "By all means, pray!" So we did! Before long we had added the little "Amen" chorus to our thanks (or grace): "A-a-amen, a-a-amen, a-amen, amen, amen." They liked that. We then added a boisterous "hey!". They really sounded pretty good. The church people lit up to their "Amen" chorus. After that the word for prayer was "Amen".

One family took a group of Chinese to dinner. The host had slipped up on returning thanks. After the meal had started one of the English speaking Chinese said, "Amen, Amen!" The host said, "Oops, we forgot to pray!" Many stories like this filtered back to the staff regarding the fact that the God-thing was getting through.

A Baptist church in Colorado provided the group with Mandarin Bibles. Prior to that the first ones to ask for Bibles were the two leading Communists of the group, Mr. Tong and Mr. Li. The whole group went home with Bibles in modern Chinese language.

It was a high privilege to show many of our country's strengths off as a result of our being hosted by the churches of America. It dawned on me that in China you wouldn't even have an opportunity to hire your own lawyer. We had three Communist officials on the team. Those under them, the other team members, were quite intimidated. They really were not free to confront their superiors. Boy, in America you can stand toe to toe with the President of the United States and share your guts and not fear for your life!

## WEST VIRGINIA

One of my worst fears was realized in West Virginia. It was late October. The weather for the first 39 days had been perfect for cycling. My prayer was that we would be able to sneak over the Allegheny Mountains undetected by the bad weather gods. It's normal to get snow there this time of the year. As we left Parkersburg, West Virginia, it started to rain and before long a serious chill set in. This is a desolate stretch of road which offers little in the way of shelter. We were numb by the time we got to Clarksburg, our Friday night destination. Saturday morning there was more rain, so we packed it in at noon and bused the team on to Mount Storm, leaving the bikers with a 30-mile run for Sunday. Two miserable days! One more and mutiny! Sunday, October 23, there was not a cloud in the sky and you better believe I was saying "thanks"! By the time we returned to the point where we had stored the bikes, it had warmed to above sixty degrees. The mountains with trees full of the brightest contrasting fall leaves made for the most memorable 30 miles of cycling in years! The leaves were so yellow and thin that when the sun shone through, it turned the highway a pale yellow--a fairy land!



enormous. The cultural gap was almost unbridgeable. The Wheels' staff and I spent half our time trying to teach them the American concept of modesty while relieving oneself. The beautiful teaching of man's union with God through Christ was not going to be clearly grasped during our brief stay with them. Get them saved? We had a hard enough time teaching them where to "pee"!

There were devotional times together. Bible stories were used as a source of instruction. An attempt was made to show the dynamics of Jesus' teachings as being helpful for the success of the tour. The teachings made a lot of sense. In fact, the Chinese shared that in their Communist indoctrination there is a soldier hero who had many of the characteristics of Jesus. The only difference was that he advocated killing your enemies. Jesus didn't, of course, and they recognized the transition from Jesus being a teacher to the Savior. We trust this truth will come into an even sharper focus for them.



*The churches really gave us the "Red Carpet" treatment!*

However, I do believe our serving them, loving them, and having made the trip physically possible for them, will certainly be seed sown that will make them the richest kind of fruit to be picked by Believers back in their homeland. There is no way they will be able to continue an agnostic or atheistic pattern of belief.

The first meal we ate together was Wheels' chance to introduce the idea of prayer. In a halting fashion I simply shared the Christian tradition of thanking God...I stopped, knowing I was taking a lot for granted. What did the idea of thanking God mean to them? Keep in mind I was speaking through an interpreter. So, I paused and then told them we had learned in America not to take our food for granted and that many of us said thanks to the One, or spirit, who provided it. I then asked if they would mind if, as a



I helped this "100 pounder" all the way across America only to have her defect in D.C.



"Pass the Ketchup!" . . . not sooo in China . . . "Pass the Soy Sauce!"

The magic of the good weather versus the bad, and the fall colors, helped create a happiness on the part of the Chinese that the staff had not yet seen. At lunchtime they broke out in spontaneous chorus of folk songs, their national anthem, and patriotic songs. They sounded like birds in spring. What a joy to hear them sing! It was as though God had placed His seal on the trip!

Because of the spirited noontime singing I asked the Chinese to sing for our host church people that evening--the United Methodist Church in Mount Storm, West Virginia. This congregation had already fed us the night before. We returned Sunday afternoon like faithful homing pigeons. Really the church people had become family in just a few hours of sharing together. The pastor was a retired Master Sergeant who had fought in World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War. He had seen it all. In fact, he fought against the Chinese in two of the wars. Since then, however, God has done a great work in this warrior's heart. One of the songs the Chinese sang was a patriotic number celebrating the return of Chinese soldiers from the Korean and Vietnam wars. Interesting--a Korean and Vietnam tank platoon leader, now a Methodist pastor, was listening to Chinese sing songs celebrating the return of Chinese soldiers to their homeland--the same soldiers that Pastor Bill fought against in the Orient. I asked Bill if the wound had been healed concerning the Chinese as an enemy. He responded, "God has wonderfully provided a new kind of balm (bomb)!"

Sunday in West Virginia was a special time for me, personally. Bill, the pastor, was a man's man, softened

*Continued on page 3*



Continued from page 2

by the teachings of Jesus. So many of the men in the church were tough truck drivers--good ole boys. The women were a nice match for the men--hardy. An early winter's night was settling in, the sky was still cloudless, and the stars had just been turned on. The crispness of the evening seemed to extend the rays of the stars. I stood outside the small, mountain church alone, as there was a brief lull in the evening's activities. I was captured for the moment by the stillness of the night. Call it luck, circumstance, whatever, but chimes smoothly broke the silence. Ever so fittingly, the song was one written by an old friend, Stuart Hamblen -- a "Gaither" of the 50's. Stuart was a popular western song writer, gambler, race horse owner, you name it. He was convincingly converted at a Graham Crusade in Los Angeles in the early 50's. He turned much of his energy over to writing sacred music. He produced a wealth of songs. His number one song was "It Is No Secret...". I have whistled it often. Back in 1954 when Stuart wrote the number one pop song, "This Old House", it was on the charts for weeks. Well, Stuart and I went to the same church and had become friends. One night he brought me one of the original recordings of "This Old House". It was on a little 45 record -- real trophy stuff! I was so pleased! He realized, then, that I didn't have a record player so the next night he brought a new record player to the house. Over the years Stuart's tumble-along-pilgrimage with God had been a source of curiosity and encouragement to me. Over the years I had lost touch with him, but there on the mountain in West Virginia I stood by myself listening to my friend's song wafting across the valley! Stuart had long since passed away, but his song, with the words "The chimes of time ring out the news another day is through; someone slipped and fell, was that someone you...it is no secret what God can do, what He's done for others, He'll do for you..." spoke to me as though he, himself, were standing next to me! It was such a tribute to Stuart...there on a lonely mountain top, and in how many other places around the world...his melody of encouragement: "It is no secret what God can do..." I went back inside the church warmed by a nicely directed stroke of what seemed to be God's timing!



William has been married one year and his wife, Helena, was on the tour. It is traditional in China for the wife to be of the same faith as her husband. The Wheels' staff was curious, would Helena mechanically embrace Christianity and experience for herself the same thing William gave witness to? A staff member shared with Helena how knowing Jesus was something you experience because you want it, not because you follow your husband's practice. Over the course of the bike tour the church people she met, the caring spirit of the staff, and personal witness from friends warmed her. She shared with one of the Wheels' staff upon reaching Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, that at the journey's end she also decided for Jesus!



MR. WU -- MAGAZINE EDITOR

Near the end of the trip I spoke through William, my chief interpreter, and simply asked if one of the Chinese would like to return "thanks". Only William, to this point, had spoken a prayer on behalf of the group. As is so often the case in an English speaking crowd, everyone felt a little uncomfortable and no one raised his hand to volunteer the prayer. Finally, Mr. Wu, our magazine editor, put his hand up. I think he was a bit shocked to realize what he had done. Then he said, "I don't know which God to pray to." That broke the ice. I said, "Feel comfortable just speaking on our behalf to the God you feel most comfortable with." I am not sure which one he chose, but he offered a warm and caring prayer that was as reverent as a prayer could be. So much of our long hours spent with them seemed to have these little hints of breakthroughs.

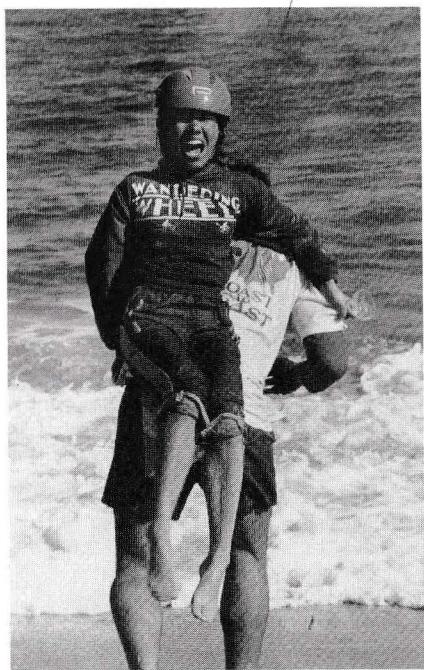
## CHINA AND SUPPORT

These are days of serious scrutiny when it comes to charitable giving. There was a combination of gifts, however, that made the American Chinese bike tour possible. First, our Wheels' vets from years past gave a total of \$60,000! There were about 240 in number who gave to the China Project. Schwinn Bicycle participated, both with product and dollars. Bill Bright, from Campus Crusade for Christ, gave an encouraging gift, as did several other nonveteran-type people. A piece of equipment was sold to help with the finances. In fact, the sale of this piece of equipment was as much a sign from God for the "go ahead" as anything we experienced.



Several times each week I showed the China film, the film of the 1986 Wheels' trip in China, to host congregations. After the film the English speaking Chinese answered questions asked by the church members. It was always a time of enlightenment.

On one occasion William, who was Wheels' Number One guide on our visits to China, shared a moving story of his conversion to Christianity. His interest in Christianity was perked by the American cyclists' visits in '86 and '87. He wrote Wheels a letter saying ours was the first viewing of Christianity he had had and he liked it. Following the Wheels visits there were faithful friends who corresponded with him concerning Christianity. More recently, William served as a guide to four Australians who were also of the Christian faith and they were able to instruct him in the steps to knowing Christ. William decided for Christ. He went on to share that evening that he knew Christianity was associated with miracles! He then said, "The Chinese coast to coast is a miracle! I never expected it to happen!" Well, it did happen and William remarked that it was like a final link in his religious pilgrimage. The reality of the coast to coast was simply a miracle. He attributed his presence in America, and that of 29 others, to a miracle which proved his new found belief in Christianity to be true.



Helena is reluctant about her Atlantic Ocean "baptism"!



Mr. Pong - Chinese team leader... he's 51 years old and as happy to reach the Atlantic as anyone!

I always feel encouraged coming to the Wheels' community for help. I believe that anyone who has participated on a tour with us has simply been given a "great deal". All our trips are subsidized in one way or another. I feel that what we are trying to do for people is of the highest kind of influence. People are always amazed at how much program we give for the price we charge. Those of you who give financially to Wheels know better than anyone else the "good" that comes from your sharing. Your gifts are multiplied many times over. Dollar for dollar, our staff members are as faithful as any I know with their time investment.

To those of you who specifically responded to our request for air fare for the China team, a *special thanks!* Your financial and even written remarks were so encouraging!



Schwinn Bicycle offered GREAT support to the tour via product and dollars.



Staff and Chinese on Atlantic.





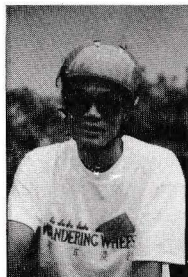
Mr. Huang Guo Hua -- 33 years old; excellent rider; married; always in good spirits; quiet but unexpectedly would make a joke and surprise us all... in English!



Mr. Zin Zhao Ling (Buddha) -- looks betray him; very athletic; 31 years old; in charge of all drivers and equipment for China Youth Travel.



Mr. Ye -- 35 years old; married with a 5-year-old daughter; the chief photographer; writes for a large newspaper with a circulation of almost two million.



Mr. Liu Hai (Lee-oo-hi) -- very important man in the city where he lives; age 33; married, with a 4-year-old daughter.



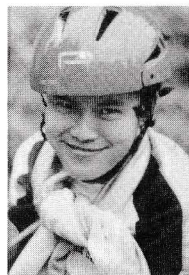
Mr. Tong -- discovered as trip progressed he was man with most authority; highest ranking Communist on tour; found him to be delightful; one of first to ask for Bible; Vice Chairman of Canton Youth Federation; married; 7-year-old daughter; 37 years old.



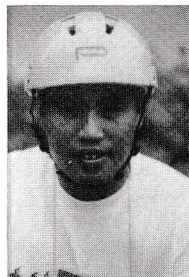
Mr. Ma (Maw) -- probably the most cheerful of all the riders; age 37; married and has an 8-year-old daughter; Vice Director of Canton Railway Station.



Mr. Dai (Die) -- youngest member of the team; works at Linhua Hotel; good soccer player; thrilled many of the American kids with soccer playing ability.



Mr. Lu Chang Wei (Jimmy) -- leading interpreter; very bright and liked to be macho; a tour guide; single, 32 years of age; looking for a job in America...he defected!



Mr. Ye Guang Zhao -- Chief of Security Department at White Swan Hotel in Canton; 39 years old; former water polo player; one of the stronger riders.



Mr. Pang (pronounced PONG as in ping) -- known as the chief; age 51; rode the whole trip; married and the father of three children; became real friend to Coach; the Deputy General Manager of Canton Branch of China Youth Travel.



Ms. Wu (Coco) -- a lady who did a wonderful job; 29 years old and a mother; Secretary to China Youth Travel.



Ms. Pan Jun (Helena) -- weighs less than 100 pounds; a real inspiration; newly married to William Su; serves as a guide and stays quite busy; top English speaking of the Chinese.



Mr. Huang Guo Ming -- the tallest member of the team at 6'½", 25 years old; airline ticket reservations.



Ms. Lin Rui Zhen (Linda) -- a skinny (102 pound) gal; pushed (by Coach) halfway across America, only to defect in Wahsington, D.C.; age 32 and very concerned about still being single (single guys beware!); a guide.



Mr. Lin -- Vice General Secretary of Canton Youth Federation; second in command; married; 3-year-old son; one of the chosen Communists to oversee trip; contagious grin.





Mr. Li (Lee) -- 31 years old; took a serious spill near the Grand Canyon but recovered in high spirits; works in boat harbor.



Mr. Wang Ye Gong (Wong) -- an outstanding singer and the Manager of the Star Hotel; age 32 and a real "mover"; serenaded his group with Chinese opera... all the way across America!



Mr. Fu (as in "Foo") -- very quiet and one of the smaller men; 5'5", 130 pounds; 35 years of age and a secretary and finance man to Mr. Tong.



Mr. Sun Ming Guang (Mike) -- Chief Secretary for Canton Tourism Bureau; age 37, married, and one son; speaks good English; strongly influenced toward Christ through grandparents; a real joy!



Mr. Liang (Lee-ong) -- speaks English; married only two months prior to trip; works for Office of Foreign Affairs; conducts many industrial tours for visiting industrialists.



Mr. Pan Nan -- only 5'4" and weighed 125 pounds; 39 years old; a military man; peasant; Purchasing Agent for China Youth Travel.



Ms. Lu Wei (Louie) -- 32 years old; mother of one; China Youth Travel in Beijing; broke her wrist early in the trip and couldn't ride the whole distance.



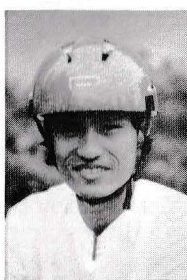
Mr. Huang Xiang Yang (Sonny) -- from Financial Bureau of Deputy Director; an accountant; married; father of a 3-month-old girl; 31 years old.



Mr. Wu -- Managing Editor of Golden Age Magazine; age 31; expressed keen interest in spiritual things; nick-named "Mugsy" which he planned to use in his next magazine article.



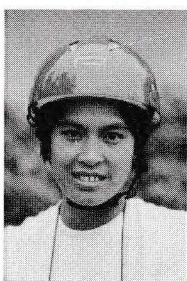
Mr. Zhou (Zow) -- works for the Youth Federation of Canton in Youth Modernization Research; married with a one-year-old son; into Chinese dance exercise; took a bad fall but didn't let it slow him down.



Mr. Kuang Wei Min (Todd) -- name given during ride; a customs official; married; a 3-year-old daughter; speaks English (learned most of it via Voice of America); the "Bob Hope" of the group!



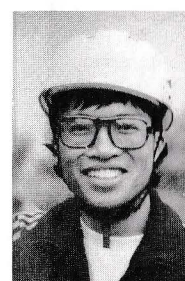
Mr. Jiang Shen (River) -- served as guide on two Wheels' visits in China; age 31; a guide for China Youth Travel; loved him.



Ms. Liu Yuan -- works as Assistant Manager of Bai Yun Hotel in Public Relations; speaks English; age 29; still single; very strong; lively personality.

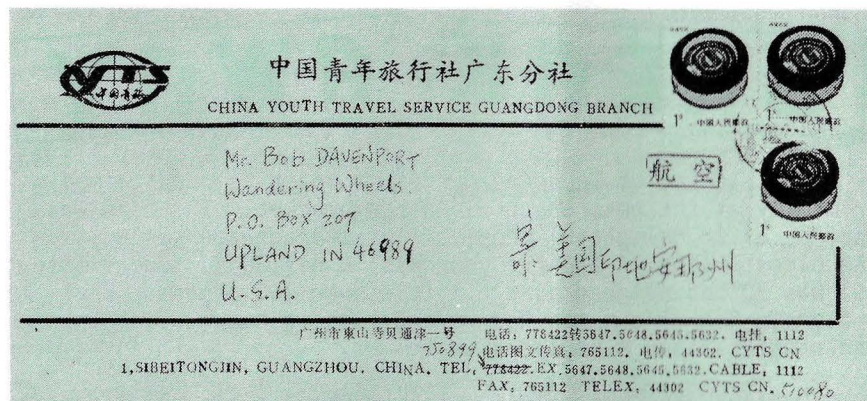


Ms. Meng Xia (Ming Shaw) -- one of the stronger lady riders; 28 years old; the mother of one child; Youth Federation.



Mr. Su Zhi Wei (William) -- referred to often in the newsletter; 28 years old; married to another team member, Helena; delightful couple; has embraced the Christian faith; a guide and helps set up tours.





Please Kindly pass the following message to Coach of Wandering Wheels.

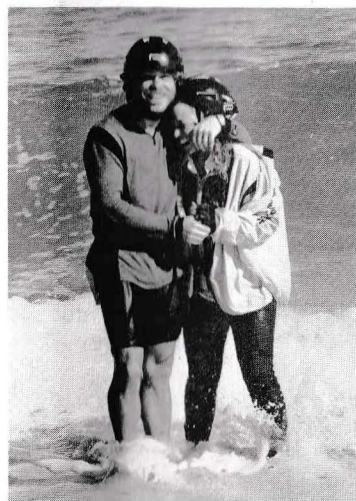
A letter from 28 Chinese who cycled across America.  
December 19, 1988

Our respected Coach and other teachers:

28 of us cyclists, with our hearts filled with the profound sentiments of your friendship and happiness from the success in crossing America, came back to Guangzhou on November 10. Then our family members, friends and colleagues asked about our cycling in America and asked us various questions about the country. We told them about all we saw and heard.



Lori Kendall – serves up *chow* (sounds oriental!?)



Pat & Judy Cole – Staff and first timers to ride coast to coast.

The TV station and newspaper in Hong Kong broadcast and

and know about American people's lives; because we had the opportunity to enjoy to the full seeing the beautiful mountains and rivers and the lovely cities of America; because we



Tony Dick – an able 18-year-old helped "shepherd" the team by driving Possum Seven.

had the opportunity to know about the various aspects of the country. America has made deep and beautiful impressions upon us. America's natural environments are so well protected. The towns are so clean and quiet. These were all beyond our expectation and imagination. Before we went to USA, we had only known Canada had the most maple trees. However in America we found the so many and so lovely maple trees with red, pink, yellow and green colours. The deepest impressions we've got were not more than those of you, Coach, Kent, Tonya, Janech, Dale, Pat, Judy, Lorri, Russ and Tony. You are a man of more than 50 years, but you have the same energy and staying power as a young man, you worked so hard and conceived



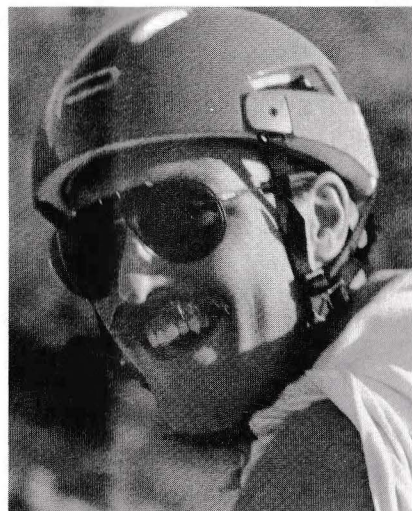


reported about the news of us cycling coast to coast in USA. Also our newspapers in China interviewed our chief Mr. Pang. Our Guangdong TV interviewed Mr. Ye, the reporter from Yangcheng Evening, and showed the pictures he took about the tour on TV. The Guangdong TV has prepared 4 series for this program, the first of which was shown last night and at noon today. So to speak, this cycling tour has influence.

Although we've been away from you for more than a month, we didn't forget about you and never will we. Cycling from



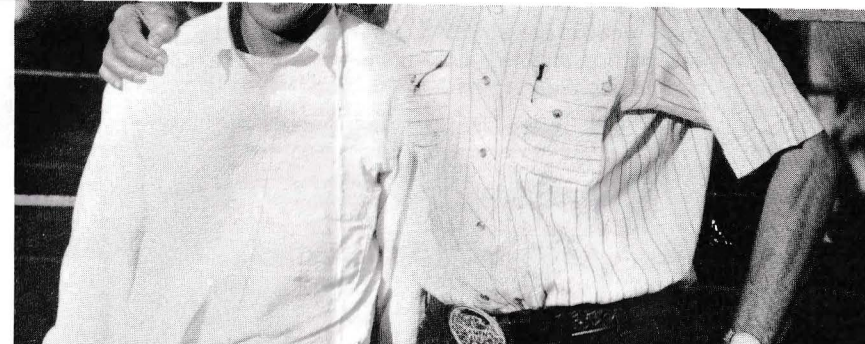
Tonya Schroyer—Taylor grad and newly engaged to staffer Kent Merrick!



Kent Merrick — Head Mechanic and Senior Executive to Coach!

the east coast of the Pacific to the west coast of the Atlantic across America is our most unforgettable and meaningful thing in our lives. There is a proverb in China saying: "When you drink water, don't forget the people who dug the well." Whenever we thought of the cycling tour in the States, we did not forget about you, Coach who made the tour possible, and we did not forget about those who cycled with us and worked for us, "Dai Je Lou", "Kent and his sweet half", "Pi-Gu Tong (Sore bottoms) and Judy", "Lori", and the many American friends who gave their support to this tour. When you meet any of these friends, please pass our gratitudes to them and tell them we miss them.

The cycling days in America were really hard. None of us guys had ever before experienced such hardship. Hard as it was, there were joys and happiness in this hardship. Because we had the opportunity to make friends with many Americans



"Trading hats" in Brawley, California! A feed-lot manager shared his 30,000 head of cattle with us!

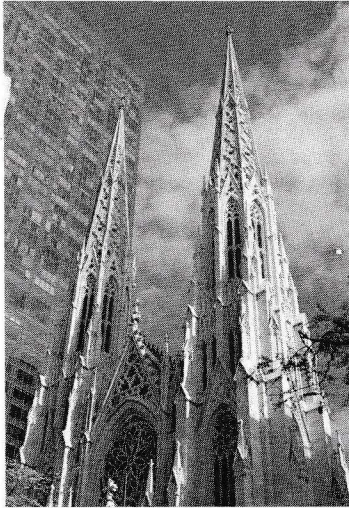
the plan so well and you took such good and so much care of us. The other friends who cycled with us volunteered to work for us, not expecting to be paid. We very much admire their spirits and their serious attitudes towards their work. We are grateful to you. We very much appreciate the hard efforts you made for our smoothly crossing America.

The albums of the pictures of the coast to coast always bring us to the happy memory of us cycling with you. You are our friends whom we'll never forget in our lives. We also wish we can see you in Guangzhou China some day and wish we can spend sometime together with you. We are expecting it. Finally we thank you again and please extend our greetings and blessings to all those who supported us. We wish you all good health. Best regards.

Yours sincerely,  
28 Chinese cyclists

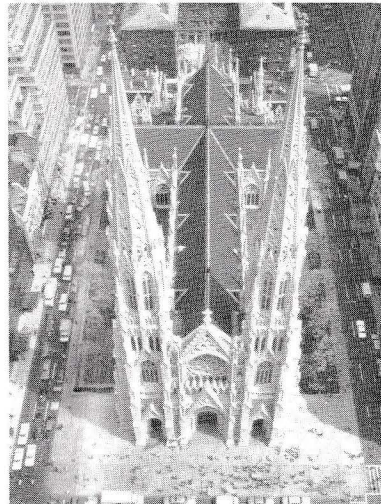






The twin steeples of St. Patrick's Cathedral in downtown New York City are a fresh reminder of a rainy evening during the closing days with the Chinese. While waiting for the group to reassemble I slipped into this most majestic of buildings--St. Patrick's. It's so looked after and cared for! Hours could be spent marveling at the craftsman's touch. The murky evening made the church a welcomed refuge. Busy New Yorkers were entering and leaving. Some knelt and prayed and hurried on, others lingered. I watched as a janitor, bent and beat looking,

was making his way to a large table loaded with flickering candles. I don't know the tradition, but evidently one lights a candle and offers a prayer...this seemed a delightful extension to a prayer, hope, or wish! The janitor, rather methodically, was scraping the melted wax away from the base of each candle into a small metal bucket. At a given moment a lady had lit the same candle from which the janitor was scraping away the wax. Wow! For one person the candle was boring work...work keeping him from going back to his closet and grabbing a smoke. At the other end of the candle a lady touching the wick with a match...hoping...! One pillar of wax and so much story!



## UP DATE ON THINGS PAST

### HISTORY

#### "1970"

#### Blind Boy Cycles Coast to Coast

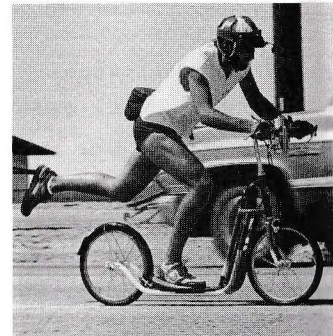
I recently phoned Doug Hassan's home. Though the family had moved, I was able to get an update from Doug's mother. Doug, second from the left, is blind and Wandering Wheels rode him coast to coast on a tandem back in 1970.

## BREAK AWAY

Last spring we launched our first coast to coast aimed primarily at the retired people's age bracket. The team was made up of 28 delightful people. The average age was 60, the oldest being 74 and the youngest in his 30's. One little gal was 70 and weighed just a little over 100 pounds. What a tiger! One of our men had recently had a heart by-pass and another rider a replaced valve.

Little Henry was an elf of a man who has his name on a list to climb Mt. Everest! He was one of the first Americans to step on to Hiroshima after the first "A" bomb was dropped. He carried an aerosol paint can with him and painted "Jesus loves you" on rocks, but always in good taste. He also had little "Jesus" stickers that wound up in the darnedest places. I saw one sticking inside a tuba a guy was playing in New Orleans! Henry had struck again!

One of the ladies was attacked by a mongrel dog. An ugly bite was taken out of her leg. It was very serious!



Above Left: Thirteen hundred miles on a Wheels' custom-built scooter! Mel Callison rode with the '88 Breakaway gang from San Diego to San Antonio. We're sure it's a record! Above Right: Three of our "Breakaways" checking out the map.

She was given medical attention but left the ride halfway across. We've heard that she is going to start all over again this year and do the whole ride. We're talking about a gal headed into her 70's!

It was so rewarding to be around these old salts. This team of older people really "wowed" the people they met along the way! I think they raised my own high-water mark, as well. I believe our 74-year-old must have had a hormone transplant!

This year's Breakaway Coast to Coast will start April 1 and close out May 8. We should have another great time and already have a pretty good team put together. The route will move from San Diego to Jacksonville. It's a wonderful



shared that good memories still linger. In fact, her grandson is asking to travel coast to coast with Wheels because of Doug's journey.



Joe Prillwitz is third from the left. He has long since graduated from seminary, has done some mission work, preached, and now is a high school counselor.

Devee Boyd, far right, is serving as a medical doctor at Mtshabezi Mission Hospital in Zimbabwe. His wife and kids continue to do a terrific job loving and caring for the less fortunate.

The thirty-five-year-old in the picture is yours truly (far left). Boy, does time fly! Give us an update on yourself!



Jerry Derr, a Wheels' vet of many trips and, most recently, Circle America I, visited recently from Lesotho, Africa. This is a little country completely surrounded by South Africa. Jerry just finished two years with the Peace Corps. He recently married a missionary gal, and inherited a family, and is now in Pietermaritzburg (South Africa) with the Methodist Church. He left me with a book out of which comes the following quote: "Khotso, Pula, Nala! We greet you, with the lovely greeting of Basotho. Peace, rain and plenty in that order, and in Lesotho, Nala or plenty means sufficiency, not more than one needs, to be a man and to be free."

time of the year to be down South.

## COAST TO COAST 1988

Although the summer seems like a long time ago, the images of our coast-to-coast trek continue to flash into our memories.

The accomplishment of 60 people riding their bicycles safely across our entire country is quite significant in itself. I'm continually thankful for God's obvious protection and care of us. He is the One Who not only watches over us, but, I believe, also continues to use the journey in each of our lives as a learning and growing experience.

It was my real privilege to lead this year's crossing and to have such a wonderful and diverse group to lead. From my parents to entire families and couples to individuals, everyone worked together to make this crossing very memorable.

Following a traditional route, as we did, another joy was to visit so many Wheels' friends along the way. It felt so good, coming in after a long day (which most of them were), to be treated special. Our friends in Ramona, Wickenburg, St. Louis, Madison and Rehoboth Beach all went out of their way to make each person on the trip feel welcomed and almost revered. I know the individuals who helped us also received much, but their willingness to serve us continues to shine as a powerful example to each of us who was on the receiving end of their love and hospitality.

Coast to coast, like life, has the good and the not so good. We had our share of hot weather (remember the drought), headwinds, hills, rain and other assorted unpleasant times. We were also able to experience God's creation in a way most of us will never have the privilege of doing again. No matter where we were or what we were enduring, we could always see people who had it much worse than we. I met a former Wheels' rider in Kansas who went coast to coast in 1978 and was really discouraged and disheartened because of the drought and what it was doing to him financially and emotionally. It caused me to not complain so much about the hills or winds or heat, such temporary obstacles, but to be thankful for all the good things happening to me. I know he was encouraged just to be around a coast-to-coast trip again and to get away from his very real troubles for a short time.



Riding coast to coast is really a privilege. At our reunion it was not only fun to see all the pictures and people and relive the war stories, but to hear how the riders in their own way are still using the lessons they learned last summer in their various arenas of life. That is the lasting reward and result of riding coast to coast on a bicycle.

Contributed by Curt Anderson

## Alaska - THE FINAL FRONTIER

Our first Alaskan bike tour began July 4 at a campsite in Babb, Montana, only 10 miles from the Canadian border. Early in the morning, accompanied by a back-up car and Possum Seven, we crossed into Alberta, heading north to Calgary. This leg of the journey was flat and extremely windy! The farms were widely spaced with expanses of yellow, flowering prairie fields between them. The metropolis of Calgary was a sudden contrast to that openness. West from Calgary, we were almost immediately in the foothills of the gorgeous Canadian Rockies. We encountered our first wildlife - mountain sheep, elk, bear, and moose. "Summit" rapidly became a favorite word, meaning we had earned the top and could then go screaming down the other side of the winding mountain pass. Much to the delight of the mosquito population, we camped out often in our four-man tents! We rode past glaciers and ice fields. Our route took us through both Banff and Glacier National Parks. Lake Louise was a highlight of the trip. Standing in front of that serene, aqua-blue glacier lake, it was overwhelming to think that the God who created this awesome splendor was the same God that knows us and our petty troubles. By the time we arrived in Prince Rupert, the northern tip of the British Columbian coastline, we had been riding 14 days straight and were ready for a break. Eric, our back-up driver, turned out to be an angel in disguise during that long stretch. His gifts of kiwis and grapes were priceless. For three days we cruised on the ferry Malaspina in the Inland Passage seeing humpback whales and eagles. We spent a whole day exploring Juneau where they claim it rains 90% of the time. The coast of Alaska is moderated and misted year round by the ocean so that it is temperate and very lush, almost tropical. It is inland, away from the sea, where the climate is so severe. We left the ferry at Haines and started inland towards our final destination, Fairbanks. Crossing several smaller mountain ranges, we ran into mud-slides in the Yukon and ended up renting a truck to get us 300 miles closer to Fairbanks.

The people we met were a big part of the success of our trip. God continually brought people into our lives to talk to and share with. One lady in Denali

things that happened on the trips.

We had a great work project in Miami at a new 100-bed mission. We cleaned paint off the windows of a newly constructed building. The mission director was impressed. We also had a couple of good meetings. The trip was a fresh reminder of all the GOOD things God has allowed us to do over the years.

## FAREWELL, POSSUM FIVE

After 10 years of faithful service to Wandering Wheels, POSSUM FIVE has taken its last trip south to be involved in the Lynx ministry program. Ten years is a long time to own anything. Most of us don't spend that period of time in a house. POSSUM FIVE was around for 10 years and 600,000 miles. The picture shows an ugly duckling of sorts (not the guys), but one that was transformed into a truly beautiful machine. From a slug-it-out daily charter bus, POSSUM FIVE turned into a piece of machinery that God used as a major link in allowing us to share His love with teenagers and adults from all over the mid-west in places all over the USA. It has allowed us to watch kids go through this same process of growing into a channel for God's love.



POSSUM FIVE also showed the potential of turning a tired vehicle into a valuable vehicle without raising prices just to see it stay afloat. Our success



(Dot Lake consists of a gas station, a little school and about four houses) shared some Grizzly Bear stories with us. We found out she home teaches her children because it allows her to teach them about her faith in Christ.

In Fairbanks we got reacquainted with flush toilets, packed up our bikes and bused to Denali National Park and Anchorage. Denali (formerly Mt. McKinley) revealed its face for us -- so majestic even at 40 miles distance! We drove six days straight to return to the hot, dry, plain little town of Upland, but we could not have been more glad to see it!

Our Alaskan trip was a pioneer trip -- full of unexpected adjustments and changes in plans; covering 1,600 miles on bikes, 7,000 miles in the Possum to Montana and back to Upland from Alaska, and 500 miles of the Alaskan coastline on the Alaskan Marine Highway! The success of this adventure was due to the 27 riders, most of whom were Wheels' veterans ranging in age from 17 to 62, who adapted to the variable circumstances and willingly "pitched in" wherever they saw a need. A bike trip is more than a scenic tour; it offers structured conflict and pain, which we normally avoid, which can lead us toward introspection, revelation, and growth. The Alaskan trip was no exception.

Contributed by Jennie Kelly and Larry Kleindienst

### January Interterm 1989

We just finished a delightful trip with 40 college students. Twenty-five of them were from a Nazarene college in Mount Vernon, Ohio. Students from Taylor and from Eastern College (near Philadelphia) were also on hand. Psychology and P.E. were taught during the trip. We ran the outer edge of Florida--a route similar to the old Taylor January runs a few years ago. It was refreshing to renew old friendships.



Boy, has the west coast of Florida changed, especially the western part of the Everglades and Naples. The alligators will soon be an endangered species.

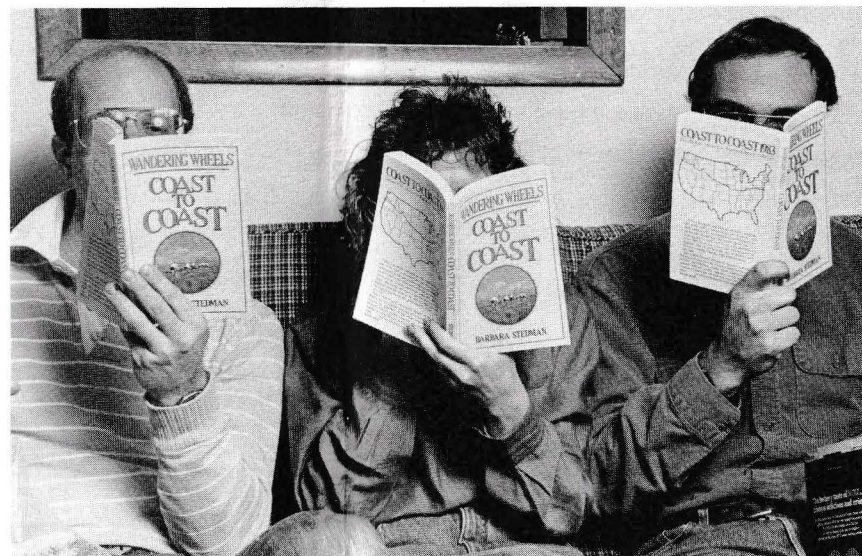
We wound up our trip in St. Petersburg. Bob Ulrich, the mayor of St. Petersburg, is an old buddy. We have taken his Sunday School kids from the First United Methodist Church

on several bike trips. He spoke so favorably of the good

in continuing to offer top-notch trips with good equipment is due to many factors: one is your sharing in the ministry with us - this is such a very important part of being able to service churches that are smaller and less financially able to participate with us; another factor is the abilities of the staff that God has put together - not just in their talent, but in their willingness to serve in a ministry that will not put them on the "Fortune 500" list.

It might also be good to note that POSSUM FIVE will be serving in a ministry with the Lynx program in Florida, where she is now based, that will include trips with college international students, most of whom will be exposed to the Christian walk for the first time. Previous trips of this nature indicate a great opportunity for ministering, and it appears that Wheels will also have this same chance to work with these students on a Possum trip this coming spring.

Contributed by Ted Bowers



Wandering Wheels Coast to Coast - It has been in the works for a few years. Barbara Stedman traveled with the 1983 team and has created a wonderful feel for a coast-to-coast bike trip. She has mixed her own feelings along with a smattering of Wheels' history of past trips. For any of you vets, it is a "must" for reading material; and for those of you wanting to inspire others to take the ride, this book is the ticket! We can send you one, postage paid, for \$5.





The "Tuesday Night Gang" was over last night. This has been going on for eight years now. I was sharing with Steve Manganello that keeping the doors open for this "family night" affair is owing up to a trust that we committed ourselves to back in '81.



... as many as 30 kids on Tuesday's "Family Night" ...

## 25 YEARS – QUARTER OF A CENTURY!!

In the fall of 1986 the 22-year-old relationship between Wandering Wheels and Taylor University was closely investigated. The insurance carriers for the University decided the high risk potential of Wheels' cycling and busing placed Taylor in an un-insurable posture. All things considered, the time had come for a legal separation between Wandering Wheels and Taylor University. Practically speaking, a "separation" would mean less difficulty in acquiring insurance for the University and some philosophical latitude for Wheels. Since that time we have been in the process of working out the details to bring about the separation. As of June 30, 1989, Wandering Wheels will no longer have any legal ties with the University. No one, however, can separate the wonderful history. The two will always be synonymous in many of your hearts.

The above, coupled with philosophical changes on the part of Coach Davenport, have created questions by Wheels' friends. Change creates grounds for rumors and we have heard some rumors that are very far-fetched and some that are well founded.

Wandering Wheels has no intention of having less impact than it has ever had over the years. Lives will continue to be changed. A little altering of our course of direction will help to bring new life. Twenty-five years of operation is a long time for any business. Most small businesses don't even last a year and some of the best churches have their first split before twenty-five years of ministry have been completed. Many wonderful Wheels' staff people have moved on to other places of employment and ministry. Several have stayed and some new people have joined us. It is our intention to use more voluntary and part-time help. We will keep you posted regarding internal matters.

The gifts and caring that come from you continue to help us operate. One of our hallmarks has been that of providing a lot of program for so little money. Wheels has always been on the cutting edge of creating markets. So many bus programs were established because Wheels, along with your help, was able to make travel so inexpensive..."A deal they couldn't turn down." We want to stay on that edge. You can trust us for maximum program at minimum cost.

### STATEMENT FROM TAYLOR UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS

"As of June 30, 1989, Wandering Wheels will be a completely separate and autonomous organization with no formal relationship with Taylor University."



Dani, my daughter, does the cooking and the rest of the staff pitch in to do dishes, clean up and play with the kids. Many of the parents drop their kids off for the evening. I am not sure what that is saying, but the young ones come because they want to come and continue to be loved and know the doors are always open to them. It's a low-key, rather non-rewarding sort of thing, but so RIGHT!



Enjoying the slab of concrete behind the Kitchen.

#### Wandering Wheels

P.O. Box 207  
Upland, IN 46989

It would be impossible to even begin to document the great blessing that the ministry of Bob Davenport and the Wandering Wheels program have been to the Kingdom of God and to the Taylor University family worldwide. This separation has taken place with highest regard for the ministry in the past and with the prayer that the future will be even more blessed of God."

A friend shared, recently, that she would love to be doing Wheels' work, but couldn't afford to leave her job. She went on to say how comforting it is to know we are out there doing what we're doing through the Wheels' program. Thus, we feel her support. Another "in the know" friend stated, "If people only knew how much mileage 'you guys' get for the dollar...they'd be impressed!" This came from one who handles a lot of money for another not-for-profit outfit.

My thanks to all those on staff and to those of you who give to make this possible!

Blessings on you!

*Cowd*



#### SPRING BREAK TRIP

March 23 to April 2, 1989

#### BREAKAWAY COAST TO COAST

April 1 to May 8, 1989

#### COAST TO COAST (Traditional)

June 10 to July 16, 1989

#### NATIONAL PARKS TOUR

July 26 to August 20, 1989

#### FALL BREAKAWAY (New England) September 22 to October 1, 1989

#### TWO-WEEKER (Prescott to Monument Valley, Arizona, via Grand Canyon)

Fall, 1989

#### CHINA TOUR (Hong Kong to Shanghai)

Fall, 1989

#### AMERICAN SOUTHWEST (Monterey, California to San Diego to Wickenburg, Arizona)

January, 1990

#### CIRCLE AMERICA III

January-August, 1990